MODERN FRANCE:

A POEM.

BY

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RUPTO FOEDERE REGNI,
CERTATUM TOTIS CONCUSSI VIRIBUS ORBIS,
JUSQUE DATUM SCELERI.

Lucan. Pharsal. lib. i.

OXFORD:

SOLD BY J. COOKE;

BY G. G. J. AND J. ROBINSON; F. AND C. RIVINGTON; T. AND J. EGERTON;
AND J. STOCKDALE, LONDON; AND W. LUNN, CAMBRIDGE.

M DCC XCIII.

But from theſe cliffs, my Sons, Britannia cried,
Her plumy Warriors marſhall'd at her ſide,
Where riſing proud, in old and awful might,
The towers of Dover ſhade the mountain's height,
From theſe bold cliffs, that overhang the main,
And circle Freemen, drive her maddening train.
High from theſe rocks let waving pendants ſtream;
Far o'er the ſeas let ſteely armour gleam;
Dark from each cleft bid threatening cannons frown,
And-creſted files the naked ſummits crown.
So ſhould yon Tyrants dare, with deſperate prow,
To plough the ſounding waves, that roll below;
Not one returning foe ſhall e'er recline
Beneath the cluſters of his bluſhing vine;
Nor ſpread with chequer'd ſhade of olives pale
The ſtreams, that wander through Rouſſillon's vale.
Hurl'd ceaſeleſs hence terrific balls ſhall glare
In fiery arches thro' the midnight air;
O'er the white cliffs the burning barks ſhall ſhine,
And ſpread their radiance round the awful brine.

Ah! hapleſs realm, to every ill a prey!
Once wing'd with bliſs thy moments ſtole away.

Thy

Thy ſunny hills with purple vineyards glow'd;
Through wavy grain thy murmuring currents flow'd.
In elmed vales, by many a ſilent flood,
With ſpiry towers thy hallow'd convents ſtood,
Where lone Devotion ſooth'd the fainted breaſt,
The world forgotten, and the heart at reſt.
Though ſtern Oppreſſion rais'd his iron wheel,
And wrung from needy hinds their hard-earn'd meal;
The race all happy, as when time begun,
Sang to the plains, and wanton'd in the ſun,
Born but to ſmile, and dance their hours away,
And ſpread their glittering plumage to the day.
Where echoing Seine thro' gay Lutetia flows,
The Tent of Bliſs with ſilken ſtreamers roſe:
Beauty and Youth ſat ſmiling at the door,
And airy footſteps beat the painted floor;
Fancy above with golden treſſes flew,
And wav'd her veſt of many a gaudy hue;
Aerial ſounds around, beneath, above,
Stole on the ſenſe, and lull'd the heart to love.
From Ruſſian ſnows, from Piſa's olive bowers,
From my imperial London's glorious towers,

The Youths of Europe croſs'd the ſtormy brine,
Gay as the morn, round Louis' throne to ſhine.
Like fairy forms, they led the merry dance,
Pointed the jeſt, and ſhot th' enlivening glance;
Soften'd their ſouls beneath a kinder clime,
And gave to joy the ſunny hours of prime.

But all is paſt. Along the waſted plains,
The hollow vales, and high o'er-arched fanes,
The piercing clarions breathe their fearful ſound;
And the dread war-horſe beats the echoing ground.
No longer vocal with the midnight quires,
Unpeopled convents ſink with all their ſpires.
Neglected vines their withering heads bow down;
And wild with weeds untended fallows frown.
Age goes half-famiſh'd down among the dead,
And infant Want ſad-plaining pines for bread.
Gay gallant youths, all-blooming, day by day,
From weeping hamlets take their mournful way,
Wild o'er devoted provinces to fly
With ſlaughter, waſte, and want—and then to die.

No thoughtleſs raptures in the heart beat high,
Glow on the cheek, and brighten in the eye:
But lone in cities wander dark Deſpair,
Pale Fear, and mute Diſtruſt, and bending Care,
With ſlow and ſullen gait and deſultory air.
There every ſtreet reſounds a ſufferer's moan;
And each ſad gale comes loaded with a groan.
Spirits of Death walk frighted Paris o'er;
O'erflow her highways with her people's gore:
Feaſt on the fleſh, that ſhrines the heavenly ſoul,
And mix from human veins the murderer's bowl.
The ſavage, panting under Indian ſkies,
Red with the blood of human ſacrifice,
Would liſt in ſad amaze the monſtrous tales,
And bleſs his gentler tribes and happier vales.

See at the helm a daring band reclin'd,
Loaded with every crime of human kind,
Men who o'er patriot chieftains forc'd their way,
By bold injuſtice to imperial ſway;
Bow'd a great people, whom they ſeem'd to free,
By fouleſt wrongs and ruthleſs tyranny:

Loos'd

Loos'd ſocial man from every mild controul,
That ſweetens life and purifies the ſoul;
And back return'd him, Nature's rugged child,
To roam a Savage through the woods and wild.
Thence, juſtly dreading Heaven's vindictive rod,
To huſh their terrors they denied their God;
And, giving earthly crimes more ample room,
Struck from their faith the realms beyond the tomb.
To freedom bad majeſtic temples riſe,
And wav'd her glorious ſtreamer thro' the ſkies,
Yet plung'd their ſteel in every nobler heart,
That greatly bore the free-born Patriot's part.

All, in whoſe veins their grandſires' generous blood,
Beating to glory, roll'd its faithful flood;
All, whoſe high ſouls on lawleſs power look'd down,
And, what their hearts diſclaim'd, diſdain'd to own;
All, who with lifted hands their God rever'd,
And fill'd thoſe temples, which their fathers rear'd;
All from their native bowers, in dead of night,
Breathleſs with ſpeed, and pallid with affright,
The ſlaughtering poniard preſſing from behind,
And yells of murderers ſounding in the wind,

Flew

Flew to the ſhores and ſeas;—in fragile bark
To tempt the fearful ocean wild and dark;
Mute with deſpair to hear the tempeſt rave
Loud round the prow, which broke the mountain wave;
To hold their deſperate progreſs 'mid the ſtorm,
And face the ſpectre Death's tremendous form.
Full oft has Pity, wandering round this ſhore,
Liſten'd to hear the diſtant daſhing oar:
Oft from theſe cliffs has Mercy ſtretch'd her hand,
To lead the ſinking fugitives to land.

You ſaw, while then, of every joy bereft,
Cold on your ſhores the languid band were left,
No earthly ſpot whereon to lay their head,
And wandering hopeleſs of their daily bread:—
You ſaw;—and round them all your bleſſings pour'd,
Warm'd at your hearth, and cheriſh'd at your board,
Laid them at evening down to gentle reſt,
And hung your fleeces round their naked breaſt.

Unhappy Louis, he with effort vain
Flew forth from miſery to a foreign plain:

For

For ſtern Misfortune met him on his way ;
Ill did the proud unfeeling race repay
The gentle virtues of his happier day.
His conſtant ſoul with chaſte affection glow'd ;
Low at his Maker's ſhrine he daily bow'd.
His heart was made for pity ; and his ſway
Led youthful merit bluſhing into day.
He, when his France lay bleeding on the ground,
Felt as a man, and ſigh'd to heal her wound ;
Not, like an Eaſtern Tyrant, made her groan
To pamper paſſion, and emblaze his throne ;
But eas'd the yoke, that ſunk her ſoul of yore ;
And gave the fury of his ſceptre o'er :
Ev'n from imperial ſtate came down—to be
The Firſt of Freemen, whom himſelf ſet free ;
More truly joy'd to aid the patriot band
In pouring plenty through the bliſsful land,
Than Charlemagne, when great in arms he ſhone,
And marſhall'd mighty monarchs round his throne.

Lamented Prince, all mournful was thy doom,
When ruthleſs murderers ſunk thee to the tomb.

O may

O may thy ſoul the joy of angels know,
And find that mercy, which it felt below!

Though ſummon'd forth to die, midſt hopeleſs pains
Thou left'ſt thy Queen in priſon and in chains;
Though, on thy way, no ſigh upheav'd the breaſt,
Nor pitying Chriſtian bad thy ſpirit reſt;
Though Hatred frowning ſaw thy meeken'd air,
Check'd thy laſt pardoning words, and ſtopp'd thy dying prayer:
Yet to deſert ſhall human kind be true,
And Virtue meet on earth her awful due.
Ages to come ſhall annual pomps beſtow,
And give the conſecrated day to woe:
The hallow'd tapers o'er thy tomb ſhall ſhine,
And ſacred hymns be chaunted round thy ſhrine;
While pious millions at their altars bend
To bleſs the ſpirit of their martyr'd friend.
The penſive prieſt with ſad delight ſhall tread
The ſolemn ſpot, where holy Louis bled:
There melting Pity of thy fall ſhall tell;
There on thy memory lonely Thought ſhall dwell:

And weeping Freedom endleſs vigils keep,
O fainted ſufferer, where thy aſhes ſleep.

With Thee, O Prince, has fallen each generous art,
Which breathes a purer ſpirit o'er the heart.
Science, on pinions that upbears the mind,
And lifts to loftier ſtate the human kind,
No more with ſoothing awe explores the ſky,
While midnight orbs illumine worlds on high;
No more on Andes dares the mountain ſtorm
To trace the rolling ſphere's majeſtic form:
But barbarous legions, fierce and unconfin'd,
Arm againſt truth, and war upon the mind;
Deride the awful wiſdom of their ſires;
Hurl round their ſculptur'd tombs conſuming fires;
And o'er the world their darken'd offspring caſt,
Reft of the guiding lore of ages paſt.

And ſee, from Gallia's broken realm is fled
The lordly pomp in tilts and tournies bred:
That pomp, whence man with nobler thought was fir'd,
His heart was ſoften'd, and his mind aſpir'd:

Thence

Thence the chaſte fair, triumphant o'er his ſoul,
Broke his wild paſſions to her ſoft controul:
Thence manly honour touch'd his gallant frame,
Fill'd him with truth, and wak'd his ſenſe to ſhame.
O proud Verſailles, with conquering monarchs gay,
How are thy awful glories paſt away!
Once in thy domes, enkindling generous pride,
The azure ribband grac'd the warrior's ſide;
Bright at the breaſt the ſtar of honour ſhin'd,
And round the knee the princely garter twin'd.
Ye long departed ſouls of high-born men,
Illuſtrious ſhades of Condé and Turenne,
Mourn o'er the ruins of your titled race,
Your lineal valour, and deſcendant grace:
No more your blood which proudeſt guerdons won,
Swells in the temples of th' ennobled ſon;
No more the valiant chieftain founds a name,
And calls a long poſterity to fame:
The glorious ſplendor of the Weſt is o'er,
And love and gallant deeds ſhall grace its courts no more.

For, O my Britons, you have ſnatch'd the ſpear,
To fight for all that makes your being dear.

Think not, while forth your peerleſs ſquadrons go,
You ſound your clarions 'gainſt a free-born foe.
No, gallant warriors; Freedom is my child,
I nurs'd the infant on my mountains wild;
Taught her in youth with front ſerene to ſweep
In ſcythed chariots round the fearful ſteep:
High from theſe cliffs, when Julius fled the plain,
She daſh'd th' imperial eagle to the main:
My Barons bold ſhe rang'd on Thames's ſtrand,
And wrench'd my charter from the tyrant's hand.
O'er Tiber's wave while papal banners play'd,
And blaſted Europe droop'd beneath their ſhade;
Here haughty Rome her impious ſway forebore,
And cowled plunderers fled Britannia's ſhore.

Nor yet her thoughts to Albion ſhe confin'd;
Her generous boſom beat for all mankind.
Oft from theſe cliffs, but ah! with tearful eyes,
She turn'd to happier ſuns and milder ſkies;
Where cooling ſtreams through ſouthern valleys ran,
And echoed mournful to the woes of man;
Where by the cluſtering vine and myrtle ſhade
With bondage bow'd Heſperian hinds were laid:

White

White o'er the hills their tents the warriors ſpread,
At Blenheim triumph'd, and at Pavia bled,
Only to lord it proudlier o'er the plains,
And bind the Denizens in ninefold chains;
While Auſtria's Eagle high o'er Scheld might ſoar,
Or Gallia's Lilies ſhade th' Iberian ſhore.

But late amaz'd a wondrous ſcene I ſaw,
On which admiring nations hung with awe.
When legions roſe, and fuming altars blaz'd,
And an whole realm one lofty pæan rais'd;
When ardent millions drew their ſhining ſteel,
And greatly vow'd their lives to Gallia's weal;
I thrill'd with joy, I bleſs'd the godlike cauſe,
I wav'd my plumy helmet in applauſe:
Fir'd them with Albion's patriot feats of yore;
Shew'd them my mountains red with freemen's gore;
Pointed, where William bad his ſtreamers fly,
Or Hampden, faint with wounds, retir'd to die.

Freedom, I hop'd, thus burſting into day,
Afar and wide would hold her glorious way.

With

With fancy's eye I ſaw the goddeſs rove,
Where golden Tagus laves his Orange grove:
Wavy with plumes I ſaw her helmet gleam
On myrtle hills, that riſe o'er Arno's ſtream:
Soaring ſhe flew to ſooth the Exile's woe
Through lone Siberia's ſunleſs waſte of ſnow.
Methought, O rapid wildly-wandering Rhine,
I ſaw thy caſtled cliffs their towers decline.
My opening thought in ſweet deluſion ſtray'd:
Ye Orient realms, be free, I rapturous ſaid:
The ſounds, now echoed by the viny Rhone,
Shall ſhake imperial Othman on his throne:
Tigris ſhall ſee her hateful harams fall,
And Freedom's pendant ſtream from Cairo's wall.
Ev'n ſouthern Clans, that drink of Niger's tide,
Shall teach their tawny babes, why Cato died:
And Orellana roll her ſealike flood,
Red with the cruſh'd Iberian's tyrant blood.
A race more noble o'er the globe ſhall riſe,
And none but freemen gaze upon the ſkies.

Such was the lofty ſcene my glowing thought,
Gladden'd to phrenzy, in my boſom wrought.

But

But all is fled. In Seine's ſequeſter'd vale
Lies wounded Freedom, ſickly, faint, and pale.
All ſad her broken armour gleams around;
And brother's blood imbrues the purple ground.
Murder an headleſs King before her lays;
And burning palaces at diſtance blaze:
While deſperate Fiends, to ſpeed her rueful end,
Have dy'd her lance in gore, and hail'd her friend.

Lo! round the globe their plundering hordes they pour,
And raſhly guide their prows to Britain's ſhore.

To curb theſe Fiends, who madly burſt their bounds,
As boiſterous ſeas o'erbear Batavian mounds,
Go forth my gallant ſons. Your country's weal
Through unborn ages hangs upon your ſteel:
And Louis' ſpirit, hovering o'er the walls,
Guides to his murderers' breaſt your vengeful balls.

But, O my Britons, when the field is won,
And the wild waſteful work of war is done;
When Conqueſt bears your ſtandard through the ſkies,
And ſhakes her plumes before you, as ſhe flies:

O then,

O then, my ſons, your common being ſcan,
And give to Gallia, what is due to man :
Think on the free-born blood, that ſwells your veins,
And fear to bind a generous race in chains:
Give them that freedom, ſocial and refin'd,
Which awes the paſſions, and ſublimes the mind:
Give them that heavenly patriotic flame,
Which glow'd of yore in Somers' godlike frame:
Give them in Nature's foremoſt rank to ſtand,
And walk with high-ſoul'd Britons hand in hand.

In Page 12, after Line 16, the following Verſes were added in the Recitation at the Theatre.

NOT ſo, my generous ſons:—ſevereſt truth,
Which ſages found of yore, informs my youth.
Midſt arching elms, that bend o'er Cherwell's ſtream,
Loſt in poetic trance they wildly dream:
There beauteous riſe before the opening thought,
What Virgil ſung, or ſacred Plato taught:
Learning, who there her Addiſon refin'd,
And fill'd her moral Johnſon's mighty mind,
Who, penſive wand'ring under ſolemn bow'rs,
Or proudly gazing on her awful tow'rs,
Has claim'd my glorious worthies for her guide,
Ormond's illuſtrious ſoul, and faithful Hyde:
She now, dear Maid, her Guildford laid at reſt,
By ev'ry friend of ſcience mourn'd and bleſs'd,
Calls noble Bentinck forth to grace her ſtage;
Gives to his ſacred truſt the riſing age;
Beſtows the meed Eliza's Leiceſter bore;
And ſeats him, where her Alfred ſat of yore.

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